

--Claim 18, line 2, ~~delete "to 17";~~
--Claim 19, line 2, ~~delete "to 18";~~
--Claim 20, line 2, ~~delete "to 19";~~
--Claim 21, line 2, ~~delete "to 20";~~
--Claim 22, line 2, ~~delete "to 21";~~
--Claim 23, line 2, ~~delete "to 22" --~~

REMARKS

This application originated in Germany, and this preliminary amendment is believed to place the claims in a form that is more consistent with the requirements and/or practice in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and to secure applicants' rights in the invention. Generally, the claims have been amended to avoid multiple dependent claims in this application. Claims 1-23 are presented, apparatus claim 1 and method claim 15 being independent. Applicants' undersigned intends to file a Second Preliminary after receipt of the Filing Receipt presenting the claims in better form for US practice.

The specification has been amended to refer to the present application as a continuation of International Patent Application PCT/EP99/04577, with an international filing date of July 2, 1999.

Applicants claim right of priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 of an application filed in Germany, serial number 198 41 974.0, filed September 14, 1998. A certified copy of the German priority document is supplied herewith.

If a telephone conference would helpfully advance prosecution, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 617-421-7939. Please apply any charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 07-1350.

Respectfully submitted,



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